

Mother Margaret Mary Hickey, F.C.J. (1889–1989)

Laura Hickey was born October 17, 1889 in North Dakota (U.S.A.). The family moved to Calgary in 1902 and Laura became a day student at Sacred Heart Convent with M. Mary Greene and other Sisters Faithful Companions of Jesus as her teachers until 1907. She attended Normal School before travelling to England to enter the Upton Novitiate on January 12, 1908. There she studied French, German and Music in addition to religious life. She pronounced her perpetual vows on August 30, 1910 in Belgium and received the name of Margaret Mary.



For 1910-1911 she taught Standards IV and V in Calgary and then was transferred to Edmonton where she taught in the Third Street Separate School and attended classes at the University of Alberta. She was one of the first sisters to go to U of A and the first to graduate with an M.A. in 1918. Later she said, “It was such a novelty, when I first arrived at the university, all the professors wanted me in their class.”

The Third Street School became known as St. Mary’s in 1923. M. Margaret Mary was principal there from 1921 until 1954 when the school was amalgamated with St. Joseph’s Composite High School and the old building demolished. Whenever she was needed to replace an absent teacher, she did so with ease, well able to take on any subject or grade level. Outside of school she organized weekend retreats in the convent for business women and the CWL. From 1954 to 1961 she was superior at the Edmonton Convent and Boarding School and again helped with teaching. Missioned to Calgary in 1961, she taught when needed. Qualities considered to be key factors in having made her an outstanding administrator and educator were her great exactitude, humanity and flexibility.

In 1966 she became Regional Superior and resided in Toronto where she entered into renewal by reading extensively and attending lectures and encouraged other FCJ Sisters to do the same. Her wit and humor were gifts she shared until the end. She spent 1974 to 1983 in Edmonton and the following years in nursing care in Calgary. She died October 6, 1989.

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